

neither the Office of Government Ethics nor the employing agency shall initiate civil or disciplinary action under this part for conduct that is indistinguishable in all material aspects from the conduct described in the advisory opinion. However, an advisory opinion issued under this section shall not insulate the employee from other civil or disciplinary action if his conduct violates any other laws, rule, regulation or lawful management policy or directive. Where an employee has actual knowledge or reason to believe that the opinion is based on fraudulent, misleading, or otherwise incorrect information, the employee's reliance on the opinion will not be deemed to be in good faith.

(d) *Revision of an ethics opinion.* Nothing in this section prohibits an agency ethics official from revising an ethics opinion on a prospective basis where he determines that the ethics opinion previously issued is incorrect, either as a matter of law or because it is based on erroneous information.

§ 2636.104 Civil, disciplinary and other action.

(a) *Civil action.* Except when the employee engages in conduct in good faith reliance upon an advisory opinion issued under § 2636.103 of this subpart, an employee who accepts an honorarium or engages in any other conduct in violation of the prohibitions, limitations and restrictions contained in this part may be subject to civil action under 5 U.S.C. app. 504(a) and a civil penalty of not more than \$10,000 or the amount of compensation the individual received for the prohibited conduct, whichever is greater. Knowing and willful failure to file the report required by § 2636.205 of this part or falsification of information thereon may subject an employee to a civil penalty of not more than \$10,000 under 5 U.S.C. app. 104(a).

(b) *Disciplinary and corrective action.* An agency may initiate disciplinary or corrective action against an employee who violates any provision of this part, which may be in addition to any civil penalty prescribed by law. When an employee engages in conduct in good faith reliance upon an advisory opinion issued under § 2636.103 of this subpart,

an agency may not initiate disciplinary or corrective action for violation of this part. Disciplinary action includes reprimand, suspension, demotion and removal. Corrective action includes any action necessary to remedy a past violation or prevent a continuing violation of this part, including but not limited to restitution or termination of an activity. It is the responsibility of the employing agency to initiate disciplinary or corrective action in appropriate cases. However, the Director of the Office of Government Ethics may order corrective action or recommend disciplinary action under the procedures at part 2638 of this subchapter. The imposition of disciplinary action is at the discretion of the employing agency.

(c) *Late Filing Fee.* An employee may be assessed a late filing fee of \$200 under 5 U.S.C. app. 104(d) for any report of payments to charitable organizations in lieu of honoraria required by § 2636.205 of this part that is filed more than 30 days after the date the report is due.

(d) *Criminal penalties.* An employee who knowingly and willfully falsifies information on a report of payments to charitable organizations in lieu of honoraria required by § 2636.205 of this part may be subject to criminal prosecution and sentencing under 18 U.S.C. 1001 and 3571.

Subpart B—The Honorarium Prohibition; Confidential Reporting of Payments to Charities in Lieu of Honoraria

§ 2636.201 General standard.

An individual may not receive any honorarium while that individual is an employee.

§ 2636.202 Relationship to other laws and regulations.

The honorarium prohibition described in this subpart is in addition to any restriction on appearances, speaking or writing or the receipt of compensation therefor to which an employee is subject under applicable standards of conduct or by reason of any statute or regulation relating to conflicts of interests. Even though compensation for an activity is not

prohibited by this subpart, an employee should accept compensation, including travel expenses, or engage in the activity for which compensation is offered, only after determining that it is not prohibited by the following:

(a) An employee is prohibited by criminal statute and by the standards of conduct at part 735 of this title and agency implementing regulations from accepting compensation for an appearance or speech made or an article written in his official capacity or as part of his official duties. Unless specifically authorized by a statute, such as 5 U.S.C. 4111, 5 U.S.C. 7342, or 31 U.S.C. 1353, this prohibition applies to the acceptance of travel expenses paid other than by the United States Government.

(b) An employee is prohibited by the standards of conduct from receiving compensation, including travel expenses, for speaking or writing on subject matter that focuses specifically on his official duties or on the responsibilities, policies and programs of his employing agency.

(c) As described in subpart C of this part, certain noncareer employees are subject to limitations on their receipt of outside earned income and may not engage in compensated teaching activities without advance approval under § 2636.307 of that subpart.

§ 2636.203 Definitions.

For purposes of this subpart:

(a) *Honorarium* means a payment of money or anything of value for an appearance, speech or article. The term does not include:

(1) Items that may be accepted under applicable standards of conduct gift regulations if they were offered by a prohibited source;

(2) Meals or other incidents of attendance, such as waiver of attendance fees or course materials furnished as part of the event at which an appearance or speech is made;

(3) Copies of publication containing articles, reprints of articles, tapes of appearances or speeches, and similar items that provide a record of the appearance, speech or article;

(4) Actual and necessary travel expenses for the employee and one relative incurred in connection with an appearance or speech or the writing or

publication of an article. Such travel expenses, when paid, reimbursed or provided in kind by another, shall not be counted as part of an honorarium. Where such expenses are not paid or reimbursed, the amount of an honorarium shall be determined by subtracting the actual and necessary travel expenses incurred in connection with the appearance or speech or the writing or publication of the article;

(5) Actual expenses in the nature of typing, editing and reproduction costs incurred in connection with the making of an appearance or speech or the writing or publication of an article, when paid or reimbursed by another;

(6) Compensation for goods or services other than appearing, speaking or writing, even though making an appearance or speech or writing an article may be an incidental task associated with provision of the goods or services;

(7) Salary, wages and other compensation pursuant to an employer's usual employee compensation plan when paid by the employer for services on a continuing basis that involve appearing, speaking or writing. For these purposes, the term "employment" refers to services rendered in the context of an employer-employee relationship. It does not include any arrangement entered into by the employee or another as an independent contractor or with an agent, speakers bureau or similar entity that facilitates appearances or speaking or writing opportunities;

(8) Compensation for teaching a course involving multiple presentations by the employee offered as part of a program of education or training sponsored and funded by the Federal government or by a state or local government;

(9) Compensation for teaching a course involving multiple presentations by the employee offered as part of the regularly established curriculum of an institution of higher education as defined at 20 U.S.C. 1141(a);

(10) An award for artistic, literary or oratorical achievement made on a competitive basis under established criteria;

(11) Witness fees credited under 5 U.S.C. 5515 against compensation payable by the United States; or